

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 AID-05 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OIC-02 /071 W

----- 085482

R 090930Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5398

INFO AMEMBASSY MANILA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PORG, PFOR, EAID, CE

SUBJECT: COLOMBO PLAN: NO CONSULTATIVE MEETING THIS YEAR

1. COLOMBO PLAN DIRECTOR HAS INFORMED EMBASSY THAT PLANS TO HOLD DECEMBER 1976 CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE IN MANILA ARE OFF. SHE FEELS MOST REALISTIC PLAN NOW WOULD BE TO SKIP THIS MEETING, SET SIGHTS ON ONE IN DECEMBER 1977, AND BEGIN SEEKING VENUE. HER INFORMAL QUERY AS TO POSSIBLE US WILLINGNESS TO HOST WAS

PARRIED ON GROUNDS IT UNLIKELY THAT AN EARLY DECISION WOULD BE FORTHCOMING. IT IS FOR SRI LANKA GOVERNMENT TO TRY TO TAP NEXT HOST GOVERNMENT. END SUMMARY.

2. COLOMBO PLAN DIRECTOR LEONORE STORAR DISCUSSED WITH EMBASSY STATE OF DISARRAY ON QUESTION OF VENUE FOR THIS YEAR'S CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING, NORMALLY HELD IN DECEMBER. AS DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL, LAST MEETING WAS IN SRI LANKA LAST DECEMBER, AND IT WAS ENVISAGED THAT 1976 MEETING WOULD BE IN WASHINGTON. USG SUBSEQUENTLY DECIDED AGAINST HOSTING MEETING THIS YEAR, CITING PROBLEMS INVOLVED IN HEAVY BICENTENNIAL AND ELECTION YEAR SCHEDULE, AND COLOMBO PLAN COUNCIL WAS SO INFORMED EARLY THIS YEAR.

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3. ACCORDING TO STORAR, PRACTICE HAS BEEN FOR GOVERNMENT HOSTING

LAST CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING TO TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR FINDING AND PINNING DOWN NEXT HOST GOVERNMENT. AFTER US BOWED OUT, GSL ASKED PHILIPPINES TO HOST 1976 MEETING. AS SOME MONTHS HAD ELAPSED WITHOUT ANY DEFINITE WORD FROM GOP, DIRECTOR STORAR RECENTLY VISITED MANILA IN ORDER TO SETTLE THE MATTER. SHE TOLD EMBASSY THAT IN MEETINGS WITH GOP OFFICIALS UP TO AND INCLUDING SECRETARY ROMULO, IT WAS MADE CLEAR THAT THE GOP WILL NOT HOST THE DECEMBER 1976 MEETING. PHILIPPINE OFFICIALS POINTED OUT THAT MANILA HAD LAST HOSTED THE MEETING IN 1971, THAT IN THE NORMAL COURSE OF THINGS ITS TURN WOULD NOT COME ROUND AGAIN FOR MANY YEARS, BUT THAT ABOVE ALL THE MINISTRIES CONCERNED WOULD BE BROKE, ESPECIALLY AFTER THE IMF/IBRD MEETINGS OF OCTOBER.

4. STORAR FEELS THAT THE ONLY PRACTICAL NEXT STEP WOULD BE TO ABANDON PLANS FOR ANOTHER MEETING PRIOR TO DECEMBER 1977. IF ONE WERE TO BE HELD SOONER, AS IN EARLY 1977, PAST EXPERIENCE INDICATES THAT THE DECEMBER 1977 ONE WOULD THEN BE SKIPPED ANYWAY, AS THERE WOULD NOT BE TWO IN THE SAME CALENDAR YEAR. IT WAS MORE REASONABLE JUST TO LOOK FORWARD TO THAT DATE FOR THE NEXT MEETING SO AS TO RETAIN THE DECEMBER CYCLE FOR FUTURE MEETINGS. HOWEVER, SUCH A DECISION SHOULD BE TAKEN AND ANNOUNCED SOON, SO THAT PREPARATION AND COLLECTION OF DOCUMENTS, AGENDA, ETC., CAN NOW BEGIN WITH THAT DATE IN MIND.

5. STRESSING THAT IT WAS THE ROLE AND PREROGATIVE OF THE GSL, NOT OF THE COLOMBO PLAN DIRECTOR, TO FIND NEW HOST, SHE ASKED QUITE UNOFFICIALLY WHAT EMBASSY THOUGHT MIGHT BE USG ATTITUDE TOWARD HOSTING DECEMBER 1977 COMMITTEE MEETING. WE REPLIED, SPEAKING EQUALLY UNOFFICIALLY, THAT IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT WASHINGTON WOULD WISH, IF FORMALLY APPROACHED, TO DEFER ANY DECISION UNTIL EARLY NEXT YEAR AND THE BEGINNING OF THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION. THUS IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THE ISSUE MIGHT ONCE AGAIN BE PLACED IN SUSPENSE FOR A TIME, RISKING SLIPPAGE ON EVEN A DECEMBER 1977 MEETING. STORAR REPLIED THAT SHE COULD SEE THE LOGIC OF THIS, AND REITERATED THAT IT WAS FOR THE GSL TO DECIDE ON WHOSE BACK TO TRY TO PLACE THE MONKEY. THE IMPLICATION, HOWEVER, WAS THAT THE GSL WOULD BE QUITE RECEPTIVE TO ADVICE FROM CP DIRECTOR AS TO POSSIBLE CANDIDATES. WE BOTH AGREED THAT NOTHING WOULD HAPPEN THIS MONTH OWING TO PREOCCUPATION WITH NON-ALIGNED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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CONFERENCE AND THE EXPECTED EXHAUSTION OF KEY MDFA OFFICIALS IMMEDIATELY THEREAFTER.

6. COMMENT: IF DEPARTMENT HAS ANY PARTICULAR VIEWS ON VENUE FOR DECEMBER 1977 MEETING, WE WOULD BE GLAD TO PASS THEM ALONG INFORMALLY TO DIRECTOR STORAR.

REED

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## Message Attributes

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